GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1890
ANSWERED ON:13.03.2007
BASMATI RICE
Sarvey Shri Sathyanarayana

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the exporters voiced their views against genetic modification of rice, particularly basmati;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government thereon in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

a) & b): No, Sir. Exporters have not voiced their views against genetic modification of rice, particularly basmati. However, consequent to restrictions put on US rice exports to EU (on detection of GM rice in long grain rice exported by United States America to Europe Union) concerns were raised about field trials of Genetically Modified (GM) rice in India. The exporters of Basmati rice fear that even an accidental contamination could jeopardize the future prospects of Basmati rice exports from India.

c) : Steps taken by Government of India in this regard are as under:

i. As a policy measure, no basmati rice has been permitted for genetic modification.
ii. The Review Committee on Genetic Manipulation (RCGM) has decided that no GM rice will be permitted for trial in geographically indicated Basmati Rice growing areas of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Uttaranchal.
iii. Ensuring strict compliance with regulations that govern trials including mandatory norm of a minimum isolation distance and physical barrier for GM trials.
iv. In each and every case the companies involved in the development of Transgenic Rice will be required to put the GM Detection Capacities in place before seeking any permission for trials.